Mr. President,

My name is Kasha Nabagesera, I am an activist and director of Kuchu Times Media Group, which provides a voice for Uganda’s LGBTIQ community.

In the five years under review, Uganda saw a deterioration of LGBTI rights. As I speak, hundreds of persons are seeing their rights violated, just for being who they are and for who they love. Today, in Uganda, a person can still be sentenced to life just for engaging in consensual same-sex intercourse. Activists on the other hand, face up to 5 years for having shared information on sexual orientation and gender identity-related topics.

In society, homophobia remains the norm, discrimination in schools and in the world of work is routine. LGBTIQ persons are often subjected to violence and torture by state and non-state actors, enduring brutal conversion therapies, beatings, burnings and forced anal examinations. This was exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic, as shelters were targeted by raids, forced closures and arrests of their residents. During the session of the UPR Working Group, Uganda stated that they are in the process of compensating all victims of abuse during the pandemic. We are waiting.

Mr. President,

I welcome all UPR recommendations that sought to improve the situation of the LGBTIQ community in Uganda. Yet, I deeply regret that the government took note of all of them, showing a continuing disregard for the human rights of minorities. Protecting and upholding LGBTIQ rights is not comparable to a fig tree planted in an unhospitable land, as Hon. Odongo stated, it is about taking care of a plant that grows universally.

I therefore urge the Council and all member States to keep Uganda under scrutiny, with particular attention to the situation of sexual minorities and urge the authorities not only to decriminalize same-sex relations but also to take effective measures to address homophobia and transphobia in society.

Thank you